- English Grammar in Use (Grammar Addition to the Textbook English for Pharmacy and Medical Bioanalytics)
- Mgr. Zuzana Katerová
- Past Simple versus Past Perfect

Past Simple versus Past Perfect

Simple Past	Past Perfect Simple		
2nd column of irregular verbs Example: I spoke	had + 3rd column of irregular verbs Example: I had spoken		
regular verbs: infinitive + ed Example: I worked	regular verbs: form of <i>have</i> + infinitive + <i>ed Example:</i> I had worked		

Exceptions

Exceptions when adding ed:

when the final letter is e, only add d

Example: love - loved

after a short, stressed vowel, the final consonant is doubled

Example: admit - admitted

final I is always doubled in British English (not in American English)

Example: travel - travelled

after a consonant, final y becomes i (but: not after a vowel)

Example: worry - worr<u>i</u>ed but: play - pla<u>y</u>ed





Use

We use Simple Past if we give past events in the order in which they occured.

However, when we look back from a certain time in the past to tell what had happened before, we use Past Perfect.

Normal order in the past or looking back to an event before a certain time in the past?

Do you just want to tell what happened some time in the past or do you want to tell what had happened before/up to a certain time in the past?

Simple Past	Past Perfect Simple		
some time in the past	before/up to a certain time in the past		
Example: Jane got up at seven. She opened her	Example: Before her sixth birthday, Jane had		
birthday presents and then the whole family went	never <i>been</i> to the zoo.		
to the zoo.			

Signal Words

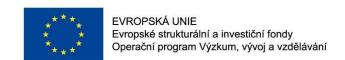
Simple Past	Past Perfect Simple
first then	already up to then
	before that day after

"After" is only used as a signal word for *Past Perfect* if it is followed by a subject + verb, meaning that one action had been completed before another action began (the new action is in *Simple Past*).

Example: After the family had had breakfast, they went to the zoo.

However, if "after" is followed by object + subject + verb, the verb belongs to the new action and is therefore in *Simple Past*.

Example: After her visit to the zoo, Jane was exhausted.





When

Depending on the situation, "when" can be used with Simple Past or Past Perfect.

Compare the following examples:

Example: When Jane saw the elephants, she was amazed. (at the same time)
When Jane had seen the elephants, she wanted to see the giraffes. (second action happened after the first action had been completed)

When Jane **went** to see the elephants, she <u>had already seen</u> the lions. (second action had been completed when the first action took place)

Before

"Before" as well can either be used with *Simple Past* or *Past Perfect*. If the action after "before" is a new action, use *Simple Past*. If the action after "before" started (and was not completed) before a certain time in the past, use *Past Perfect*.

Compare the following examples:

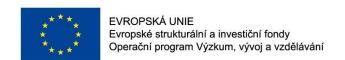
Example: Jane had read a lot about elephants before she went to the zoo.

Jane went to the zoo before she had finished reading her new book about elephants.

Test your knowledge on Past Simple and Past Perfect Simple. Then check your answers below and you will see how well you have done in the test.

Put the verbs into the correct tense (simple past or pas perfect simple).

1.	It (be)	a cold and rainy Sunday, so I (decide)	to finish the essay
	that I (start)	writing a few days before.	
2.	I (switch)	on the computer and (open)	the document.
3.	Then I (begin)	looking for my notes that I (handy	write) on a sheet
	of paper.		
4.	But the notes (be)	not on my desk and I (can / no	remember
	where I (put)	them.	
5.	I (turn)	the whole house upside down.	





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6.	And where (find / I)		my notes?		
7.	I (leave)	them in	the sitting room, under a h	uge staple of pa	apers and magazines.
8.	Now that I (find)		my notes, I (want)	to conf	tinue writing my essay
9.	First I (know / not)		what to write but then I	(have)	lots of ideas.
10.	I (complete / almost)		my essay when my co	mputer suddenl	ly (crash)
	and I	(notice)	that I (forget)		to save the document
11.	After I (reboot)	n	ny computer, I (see)	that a	t least 5 of the pages I
	(type)	(be)	missing.		
12.	So I (have)	to sta	rt all over again.		

Now check your answers!

- 1. It was a cold and rainy Sunday, so I decided to finish the essay that I had started writing a few days before.
- 2. I switched on the computer and opened the document.
- 3. Then I began looking for my notes that I had handwritten on a sheet of paper.
- 4. But the notes were not on my desk and I could not remember where I had put them.
- 5. I turned the whole house upside down.
- 6. And where did I find my notes?
- 7. I had left them in the sitting room, under a huge staple of papers and magazines.
- 8. Now that I had found my notes, I wanted to continue writing my essay.
- 9. First I did not know what to write but then I had lots of ideas.
- 10. I had almost completed my essay when my computer suddenly crashed and I noticed that I had forgotten to save the document.
- 11. After I had rebooted my computer, I saw that at least 5 of the pages I had typed were missing.
- 12. So I had to start all over again.

